

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-38 are pending in this application. Among the pending claims, claims 1, 4, 10, 18-20, 24, 28 and 33-38 are independent. Claims 35-38 are allowed. Claim 32 is objected to but indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-31, 33 and 34 stand rejected. By this amendment, claims 1-31, 33 and 34 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 32 is amended. No new matter has been entered by these amendments.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claims 1-16, 18 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Publ. No. 09-243899 A to Kaneda ("Kaneda"). Claims 20-31, 33 and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,731,339 to Ohkawara ("Ohkawara"). Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,485,208 to Mabuchi et al. ("Mabuchi").

As indicated above, claims 1-31, 33 and 34 have been cancelled thereby rendering the rejections directed to these claims moot.

Applicant has chosen in the interest of expediting prosecution of this patent application to distinguish the cited documents from the pending claims as set forth above. However, these statements should not be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact, prior art.

Allowable Claims

As shown above, claim 32 has been rewritten in independent claim reciting all of the elements of the base claim (i.e., claim 28). Accordingly, claim 32 is believed allowable as indicated in the Office Action.

Applicant believes that the application as amended containing only allowable claims (i.e., claims 32 and 35-38) is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

AUTHORIZATION

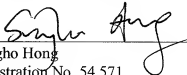
No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4490US1). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

Dated: October 10, 2007

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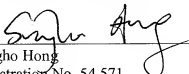
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